**East Dulwich Tabernacle Sunday School**

**New Year Motto Text 2024**

***‘Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice.’* Psalm 5.11.**

**NOTES**

Psalm 5 Hymn 393 : I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus.

Children can often be amazed at the stunts and tricks carried out by ‘thrill-seekers’. Tightrope walkers (some blindfolded and without harnesses) trust their lives to a thin piece of wire, tentatively balancing one foot in front of the other in between tall skyscrapers or high above the circus floor; one slip and they’re gone!

Perhaps we wouldn’t dream of taking such risks, but human beings exercise trust all the time.

Do we think carefully about who or what we trust?

Suppose you move to a new area and need a new school.

How do you (or your parents) decide which one to apply to?

Maybe you ask your new neighbours about how good the teaching and pupil behaviour is.

Maybe you visit the school and look at reports. You need to take care. This is an important decision. This will affect your education and future.

Imagine you have just passed your driving test and want to get a car.

Someone offers you a shining car at a very cheap price.

But is the car safe to drive? What if you took your friends out and the steering fails and you had a terrible crash? What steps would you take before buying the car?

You might find out about the salesman. Is he honest, is he trustworthy?

You might ask someone to check the engine, etc.

A wise person would ask questions, look at the evidence, think carefully.

If we need to take care about what school we go to, or what car we buy, we need to take even greater care about who we trust for advice about life and eternity.

Who will give us good advice?

Who will tell the truth?

Who really cares about us and our souls?

Worldly trust What is trust? A dictionary tells us it is a ‘firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something’.

People have always trusted in things other than the true and living God.

Some trust in idols, others in riches, many people trust and believe in themselves e.g. athletes and ‘self-made’ millionaires.

Psalm 20.7 tells us that in Bible times some people ‘trust in chariots’. Why chariots? They were an early form of fast transportation, a vital tool in warfare and enjoyed for entertainment purposes i.e. chariot racing.

Things have changed little over the centuries as political leaders trust in their weapons of mass destruction, people still trust in their fast and expensive cars and many young people and adults trust in entertainment to remain in high spirits (e.g. music, sports, celebrity gossip, cinema, drugs and alcohol).

What about technology?

Today, many homes have clever doorbell cameras and intercoms so you can speak to visitors while you’re out.

People put their trust in these as a form of home security, but in the case of a robbery, all the camera can do is show you there’s a burglar, it doesn’t actually stop them breaking in!

Much is taught in schools about ‘trusted adults’ (e.g. police officers, doctors etc.) While it is important to know who to go to in an emergency, the best person to call upon when we are in spiritual trouble is the Lord, and to seek advice from His Word and people e.g. Christian parents or Sunday School/Bible Class teachers.

These are the people who have trusted in the Lord and experienced His help so can point you to the greatest help for your soul.

It can be hard to know who or what to trust today in our age of artificial intelligence, Instagram filters and fake news.

Children can gain or lose trust with adults and friends according to their behaviour and honesty.

While these things are changeable, ‘trust in thee [the Lord]’ is certain. Trust in the Lord (Proverbs 3.5)

There are many examples of those who have trusted in the Lord and were not disappointed. Here is a small selection, please choose the most appropriate for your class.

**Noah** – knew nothing of heavy rain, yet built an ark while others mocked, believing the Lord would rescue his family and the animals from the judgement to come (Genesis 6.12-22).

**Jochebed and Miria**m – Moses’ mother Jochebed hid him at great risk, first at home and then in a basket amongst bulrushes trusting that the Lord would keep him safe (Exodus 2.2-9).

**Abraham** – left the comforts of Ur for a life in tents. Later he would be prepared to sacrifice his longed for only child believing – but not knowing for sure – that the Lord would somehow raise him up to fulfil His promise (Hebrews 11.8-10, 17-19).

**Joseph** – trusted that he would not be forgotten in prison on false charges (Genesis 39.20-23, 40.14-15, 41.38-40).

**Esther** – showed great courage and trusted that the Lord had put her in a useful position, enabling her to get a vital hearing from the king (Esther 4.11, 5.1-3). **Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego** – trusted in the Lord’s protection as they walked in the midst of a burning fiery furnace, determined not to give in to idolatry (Daniel 3).

**The Roman Centurion** – believed a single word from the Lord could heal his servant (Matthew 8.5-10).

**The Woman** with an issue of blood – having spent much money on earthly doctors, this woman trusted that a simple touch of the Lord’s garment could heal her (Luke 8.43-48).

**William Carey** – had laboured in India for seven years without an Indian convert but trusted that the Lord would grant fruit from the missionary endeavour.

All these men and women were tested by life and the Lord.

There might be tests of different kinds in the year ahead for many of us. Believers and unbelievers alike encounter difficulties and challenges (e.g. wars, natural disasters, injustices, disappointments) but our motto text is clear that only one group will ultimately rejoice.

From cover to cover, the Bible separates ‘those that put their trust in thee’ from those who do not.

Remember the Red Sea crossing? While the Israelites walked on dry ground, the Egyptians were drowned. On the last day there will be a great separation e.g. wheat from tares (Matthew 13.37-43), sheep from goats (Matthew 25.32-34) and believers from unbelievers in the midst of activity (Matthew 24.40-41). Those that trust in thee, are those who have repented and trust in what the Lord Jesus did on Calvary’s cross.

They trust in the promise of salvation first revealed in Genesis 3.15 and the many other promises of forgiveness for their sin, protection, love and Heaven.

They have trusted that He will provide them with new and better friends if that is a barrier to seeking Him, that no sinner is too bad to find the Saviour and that whosoever believes on Him will not perish but have everlasting life.

Rejoice The Gospel is ‘good news’ and many are happy to hear it.

Perhaps you’re happy when you get an extra text token for answering a question, but look for distractions during the Bible reading, or you’re happy to come to church to see your friends but when sin and repentance are mentioned you immediately switch off.

Happiness and joy are similar but different. Happiness can be fleeting, whereas joy is deep and constant.

The angels brought tidings of ‘great joy’ at the birth of the Lord and we know there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents (Luke 15.7).

For the Christian, the life and work of the Saviour and their own new birth mean they can, and should, ‘rejoice evermore’ (1 Thessalonians 5.16) as they are ever thankful for the Lord’s sacrifice in coming to earth to secure their salvation.

No matter how difficult or gloomy life might get, as they reflect on their spiritual blessings they are filled with deep rooted joy – a wonderful gift and fruit of the Spirit. 1 Peter 1.8 tells us of ‘joy unspeakable’ (so great it cannot be put into words) for all who put their trust in the Lord.

May every child know of this in the year ahead and look forward to even more in Heaven.